

## Family Wellness First

### The New Wellness Care for Children

Chiropractic is a healthcare profession that is very multifaceted, encompasses all ages by taking care of people of all ages, and can help regain, restore, and maintain optimal health throughout a lifetime. This applies to the neonate, infant, child, adolescent, adult, and geriatric patient.

Chiropractic care is unlimited in its approach to wellness, given the many aspects of health the nerve system affects. What is becoming more evident in society today is the notion that we need to start taking better care of our bodies. We need to start eating better, exercising more, and keeping our bodies more balanced for enhanced health.

Chiropractic for adults is very important, but chiropractic for kids is vital. Children today have many more obstacles to face than they may have had 20 to 25 years ago. A doctor of chiropractic's main focus and objective is to reduce neurological insult caused by misalignment in the child's spine. Locating, analyzing, and correcting misalignments in the spine can have a dramatic effect on the overall state of a child's health and behavioral well-being.

#### Why Should Children Have Chiropractic Care?

More and more parents are seeking chiropractic care for their children because many spinal problems seen in adults begin as early as birth.



Even natural birthing methods can stress an infant's spine and developing nerve system. The resulting irritation to the nerve system caused by spinal and cranial misalignment can cause many newborn health complaints. Colic, breathing problems, developmental delay, nursing difficulties, sleep disturbances, allergic reactions, and chronic infections can often be traced to nerve system stress.

Since significant spinal trauma can occur at birth, many parents have their newborns checked for it. As the infant grows, learning to hold up his or her head, sit, crawl and walk are all activities that affect spinal alignment. These milestones are important times to have a child evaluated by a chiropractor.

As the child begins to participate in regular childhood activities, such as skating or riding a bike, small yet significant spinal misalignments may occur. Childhood injury is one of the most common reasons a parent seeks care for their child. If neglected, spinal traumas during this period of rapid growth may lead to more serious problems later in life. These misalignments may or may not result in immediate pain or symptoms.

Subtle trauma throughout childhood will affect the future development of the spine, leading to impaired nerve system function. Any interference to the vital nerve system will adversely affect the body's ability to function and grow at its best. Regular chiropractic checkups throughout childhood can identify potential spinal injury from these traumas, allowing corrections to be made early in life, to help avoid many of the health complaints seen later in adults.

Another reason for seeking out care is the resolution of a particular symptom or condition. It is important to understand that the doctor of chiropractic does not diagnose or treat these conditions or diseases. The expertise of the chiropractor is in checking the child's spine for misalignments that impair nerve system function, thereby affecting overall body function.

## Establishing and Advancing the Chiropractic Family Wellness Lifestyle

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These misalignments interfere with the nerves' ability to transmit vital information from the brain to the rest of the body.

The nervous system controls and coordinates the function of all the systems in the body: the circulatory, respiratory, digestive, hormonal, eliminative, and immune systems. This is why nerve interference can impair any aspect of health. The chiropractic adjustment restores nerve system function, allowing the body the ability to express a greater state of health and well-being.

Your chiropractor will take a case history and perform an exam to determine if spinal misalignments are present. Chiropractic adjusting procedures are modified to fit a child's size, weight, and unique spinal developmental stage. Given that some chiropractors do not work with children, it is always best to call the office first. Some practitioners tailor their practice around

children and focus on preventative health, while others focus on other specialties. All chiropractors on the ICPA website ([www.icpa4kids.org](http://www.icpa4kids.org)) focus their practices towards the care of children.

Adjustments can be performed with hands, instruments, or pillow-like blocks. They are both gentle and specific to the child's developing spinal structures. Most parents report that their children enjoy their chiropractic adjustments and look forward to subsequent visits. They also report that their children experience a greater level of health while under regular chiropractic care.

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Modified excerpt from: *The New Wellness Care for Children* by Scott A. Darragh, DC, MPH.  
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